

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 02276 271550Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-01 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 OES-06 SP-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7853
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG
SUBJECT: REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM

REF: STATE 090458

1. REACTION TO CARTER ENERGY SPEECH MODERATE IN LOCAL PRESS. ITEMS BASED PRIMARILY ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS AND CARRIED ON INSIDE PAGES. CARTOON IN ARAB TIMES, ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY, APRIL 23, SHOWS CARTER OVER OIL BARREL. CAPTIONS IN OTHER DAILIES (APRIL 22) STATE "CARTER'S ENERGY PROGRAM STIRS UP STRONG REACTION AMONG CONGRESSMEN AND AUTO MANUFACTURERS" (AL WATAN); "GULF WELCOMES CARTER STATEMENT...." (AL QABAS AND AL ANBA); "OPEC WELCOMES CARTER'S ENERGY SAVING PROGRAM. STRONG OPPOSITION IN CONGRESS...." (AL RAI AL 'AM).

2. AL SIYASA, APRIL 21, CARRIED A COMMENTARY BY ITS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ANALYST, MUSTAFA ABU LIBDEH, WHO COULD NOT HELP GLOATING A BIT. LIBDEH INTERPRETS SPEECH AS A "MATTER THAT DESERVES MORE THAN JUST A FEELING OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 KUWAIT 02276 271550Z

RAPTURE.....TO DISCOVER THAT THEY (ARAB COUNTRIES) ALONECONTROL THE DESTINY OF THE STRONGEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD."

3. AL WATAN IN APRIL 22 EDITORIAL BY AWNI SADEQ LABELS "CARTER ENERGY SPEECH A CONTINUATION OF AMERICAN THREAT POLICY....." WRITER THINKS IT "MORE DIRECTED AT OIL

PRODUCING COUNTRIES THAN AMERICAN PEOPLE." HE OBSERVES:
BY LISTENING TO CARTER'S SPEECH ONE WOULD THINK THAT OIL
PRODUCING COUNTRIES....ACTUALLY (ARE) A THREAT TO U.S.
NATIONAL SECURITY." AL-SIYASA, ON SAME DAY, CARRIED
ARTICLE THAT SAID THAT OPEC WISHES PRESIDENT CARTER
SUCCESS "IN EXECUTING THE NEW AMERICAN PROGRAM FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ENERGY". AL-SKYASA REPORTED THAT
OFFICIALS IN THE GULF AREA SAID THAT PRESIDENT'S PROGRAM
SUPPORTED THEIR BELIEF THAT PETROLEUM IS TOO PRECIOUS
A COMMODITY TO BE WASTED AND CONSUMED EXTRAVAGANTLY.
THEY REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT THESE PROPOSALS HAVE
JUSTIFIED THE PRICE POLICY ADOPTED BY THE OPEC 11.

4. AL-ANBA, ON APRIL 26, IN COMMENTS ON CARTER'S ENERGY
PROGRAM, STRESSED A "SEVERE DIFFERENCE" BETWEEN THE
ADMINISTRATION AND OIL COMPANIES. WRITER ANTICIPATES A
STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE TWO AND WONDERS WHETHER CARTER CAN
"FOSTER HIS POSITION AS A STRONG PRESIDENT."

5. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, OIL MINISTRY UNDERSECRETARY
AL ADASANI EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT PROGRAM WOULD HAVE EASY
TIME WITH CONGRESS AND WONDERED WHETHER IT WOULD BE
PASSED "TWO YEARS FROM NOW." ECHOING ADASANI'S SENTIMENT,
SENIOR OFFICIAL OF ORGANIZATION OF ARAB PETROLEUM EXPORT-
ING COUNTRIES (OAPEC) COMMENTED THAT, WHILE PLAN SEEMED
SOUND AND CONTAINED FEW SURPRISES, MANY OF ITS MEASURES,
SUCH AS THE GASOLINE TAX, WERE LIKELY TO FACE OPPOSITION
IN CONGRESS. ALSO, OFFICIAL REMARKED ON SEEMING LACK
OF SIGNIFICANT FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF
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PAGE 03 KUWAIT 02276 271550Z

ALTERNATE ENERGY SOURCES. HE COMMENDED PRESIDENT'S
PROPOSAL TO RAISE U.S. OIL PRICE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
PRICE THROUGH TAXATION, SAYING THAT USG HAD FINALLY
COME AROUND TO AGREEING WITH OPEC'S POSITION ON OIL
PRICING. A NUMBER OF KUWAIT OIL MINISTRY OFFICIALS
HAVE ECHOED OAPEC OFFICIAL'S COMMENTS.

6. COMMENT: GENERALLY, OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH ENERGY
MATTERS IN KUWAIT HAVE APPLAUDED PRESIDENT'S ENERGY
PROGRAM AS LONG OVERDUE. THEY HAVE BEEN VERY APPRECI-
ATIVE OF WIRELESS-FILE-BASED INFORMATION ON THE PRESIDENT'S
PROGRAM WHICH WE HAVE SENT THEM. POST WOULD APPRECIATE
RECEIVING ANY SPECIFICS ON PHASE-OUT OF ENTITLEMENTS
PROGRAM AND ON DEREGULATION OF LPG PRICES WHICH DEPART-
MENT CAN PROVIDE SINCE THESE MATTERS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST
TO OIL MINISTRY.
MAESTRONE

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